Boston, August 15. 1847.

My dear Sir, and Friend,

Writing is such an admirable means of communication, where conversation is utterly impossible, that I cannot say a word in disrespect to it; but it is so imperfect, when compared with conversation, and thoughts can be only so slowly committed to paper, that when, as at present, I am longing for a day's talk, the writing of a letter makes me well-nigh impatient. So much has transpired, on which I should like to converse with you and my Bristol friends generally – so effectually has our denomination been stirred here by the discussion at Hackney, and by your Letter to Mr. Tagart, that I long to see you, & speak of a thousand things, for which a letter cannot be a medium.

Every thing indicates that the discussion at Hackney was well-timed, and that it has told upon many minds here. Your letter, coming directly upon it, & so well following up the subject, produced a deep sensation. The Anti-slavery papers, and the "Christian World", published it. The "Gen. Register" declined publishing it, though formally requested to do so by myself, and specially urged by my father, (who has been a devoted Unitarian, all his life I may say, always ready to aid every Unitarian movement, and a subscriber to the "Register" from the period of its first establishment, more than 25 years ago). Notwithstanding this refusal however, yesterday's "Register" contains a large part of your letter, a portion of it being omitted on account of "offensive personalities" says the Editor! I was struck with this remark, and the fact that it was applied to your letter. Moderate & calm & dignified as it is, you see you it could not escape such epithets. Had any letter been free from such liability, I should have supposed yours was that letter; but you are brought into the same category with all who venture to dispute the rights of Slavery here, and to expose the moral blindness of those who assume to be the religious leaders of the people. – I also had your Letter struck off on a separate sheet, and have been widely circulating it among Unitarians, ministers & laymen. By last Steamship I sent you copies of Chr. World, (containing your letter), of the Letter on separate sheet, &c. The form of the latter is not what I directed. I told the printer to arrange it in four

Columnas, which w'd have given it in a better shape (materially) than at present. However, the letter is the same every way - very good, and a very great help to us. The "Register" is not willing its readers should see those "offensive personalities"!

The discussion at London, and other Anti-Slavery sayings and doings, abroad and at home, has at length brought out Dr. Dewey, in a letter on Abolitionism. This letter makes the case, for Dr. Dewey, no better than before - if possible, worse, as will be made to appear, before his letter is done with. The letter has been published, in full, in all three of the Unitarian papers (2 in Boston, 1 in N. York - "Christian Inquirer") and doubtless will be in Liberator & Standard. The "Christian World" of yesterday has a very good criticism upon it, considering all circumstances. The "Register" briefly noticed it the week before. - I send you, by this Mail, copies of "Reg." for 2 weeks past, also of last "World", that you may see these several documents.

In the last "Inquirer" received here (viz. for July 17.) I notice Mr. Bishop's letter, followed by some editorial remarks, of a singularly foggy nature; it was quite a study to get at the real meaning of the writer - [Who is the Editor?] - followed then by my letter from the "Liberator" of June 4. All this, or rather Mr. Bishop's letter & mine, are copied (as you will see) into yesterday's "Register", with a not unintelligible intimation that I have misrepresented american Unitarians to you English folk, and that I, with others, have "instigated" you to all you have said or done on Slavery. If the "Reg." is not hopelessly mean, it will publish a statement from me in reply next Saturday, which I intend to give it the opportunity of doing. - Mr. Bishop, in referring to my letter, gives a somewhat different meaning to one point in my letter from that which I gave it. He says that "according to Mr. May, the Am. Unit. Ch., as a body, view [Slavery] with blank indifference" - no! I said not that, but this, of the body, "Its leading influences, and its high places, for the most part, are altogether given over to what I must call," &c. The difference is observable & important. The former, had I made it, would have been an unjust charge; the latter I believe to be the sober truth, and am ready with my proof, whenever called for. I made the statement publicly last June; the editor of the Register pretends he has just become aware of it. It may be so.

but this is somewhat strange; for an article of mine of an entirely similar nature, on the same subject, & stating the same facts, appeared in the "Christian World" at the same time. What troubles them is that the English Unit^ns. have noticed it, published it, & are moved by its facts. There is much interest, I doubt not, felt in the Slavery question in the Unitarian body; but its leading & controlling influences, "for the most part," are adverse to any agitation, discussion, notice, action upon the subject, whatsoever. It has been the hardest matter in the world to induce them to take any action at all; and when it has been brought up, and zealously opposed by these men, they have usually left the meeting before the discussion has closed, with evident contempt for the whole matter, & thus an appearance of great unanimity has been given to our ~~our~~ votes, which would not have been, had these men staid to give the final vote. Still, I am happy to believe, they could not have ~~changed~~ moved the final vote; and, knowing this, was reason, in part, doubtless for their retreat. These points I intend to touch in my letter to the "Register".

— Please notice that the "Register" of week before last, in referring to the editorial remarks of the "London Inquirer", & quoting a portion, says they are "that could have been ~~watched~~ desired;" the "Register never said ~~that~~ every thing

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of Mr. Hincks's articles on Am^n Slavery. — I know not who the present editorial writers for the "R." are. It has no established Editor. Rev. Mr. Morison left the post, some weeks ago. — I am glad to learn that Mr. Hincks proposes coming to America. If he could get an engagement to give a course of Lectures, on the Lowell Institute foundation in this City, he would find a very handsome compensation accruing therefrom. I shall hope to see him, and depend on doing so, if he come. I did not see him, when I was in England. — By some mistake, or accident, no numbers of the "Inquirer" for July 3^d, & July 10^th, have been received here. The N^o for July 17^th alone came by last Steamship. Perhaps the next ship, (due here in 2 or 3 days) will bring the tardy papers; otherwise, I must take some pains to get ~~them~~ the copies sent. One of those papers, I suppose, contains Mr. Tagart's reply to your letter, of which you speak. I have, of course, not yet seen it. — I am very glad to see that Joseph Barker has published the work "Am^n Slavery as it is — Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses," in his Library. — Venturing the expression of the hope that at a Box

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will come from Bristol to our next winter's Bazaar, may I ask of you the favour to send me a copy of said little work therein? — As to the Bazaar we have no right to infer, because you have already done so much and generously for us, that therefore you will do so again, & again. Yet it affords so much ground for the expectation that you will do so, that it is not strange (you will admit) that we indulge it. Your gifts are very much to us — the unanswerable proof they afford of your sympathy with us, and of your resolute purpose to stand by the work, are everything to us. — Slavery must fall; — before such blows as are evidently falling thicker & heavier on it, and all who stand forth to defend or screen it, it must go down. It totters & trembles. Note Mr. Calhoun's late letter; a more cool & long-headed politician we have not than John C. Calhoun of So. Carolina. He says, "We must not be deceived. The time has come when the question must be met. It can no longer be avoided, nor, if it could, is it desirable. The longer it is postponed, the more inveterate & dangerous will become the hostile feelings between the Slaveholding & non-Slaveholding States, &c. &c." [See "Liberator" of May 31st — the precise date I cannot give, but it is the same number, which gives, on 1st page, the Trial of the Christian Witness. I believe the next Congress will present the effects of Anti-Slavery labour, in past years, in its action on the "Wilmot Proviso", on the Mexican War, &c.

I am very glad that Mr. Bishop wrote that letter to the "Inquirer" [redacted] How noticeable it is that the Abolitionists almost invariably come out with their own names; their opponents, usually, anonymously. What has become of "Amicus"? I should suppose that Hackney discussion would have roused him from the worst sort of lethargy.

Your brief note (on a half-sheet) of July 18th came duly to hand by last Steamship. The letter enclosed in it for Dr. Gannett was forthwith left at his house, as requested. I have not since fallen in with him. He is passing the summer at Cape Ann; and is very little in the city. The weather is very comfortably cool now; but it has been most oppressively hot, especially through July — the mercury ranging at 86° to 98° for weeks together.

I feel somewhat curious to know whether the "Inquirer" will admit any part of my letter to Mr. Armstrong. For reasons before expressed, I am quite desirous it should be published. Your suggestion, as to leaving out

the part which attributes motives to those who signed the letter of invitation to the English brethren, I entirely accord with. "We cannot know, in such case, what these motives were; and, in the case of some few of the signers, I am convinced no motive, inimical to the Anti-Slavery Cause, could have influenced them." As to the others, I have not altered my opinion. I have neither seen, or heard, aught of Mr. Armstrong's letter to Dr. Parkman; nor have I fallen in with him, either, since I received your letter, making mention of it. — I hope that yourself, or Mr. Armstrong, will take some public notice of Dr. Dewey's Letter. His admission that he said at Washington that the Gospel had no Abolitionism in it, ought to be made public, and especial notice called to it. Uttered as it was to a slaveholding audience it was, in the understanding of 99 out of every 100 of his hearers, the same as if he had said the Gospel does not condemn Slavery; just the same, the effect the same, — the consideration & approval of the most inveterate slaveholder would be bestowed, all the same. Coupled too, as it was, with sneers against the "radicalism" of those who demand "no union with slaveholders," it was a sweet morsel to his hearers, rendered thereby doubly base and mean in him to give. He even descends to take up, & use in the pulpit, the vulgar cry of the lowest part of the press about "anti-government"-ism. Dr. Dewey very well knows that the men, whom he would stigmatize as "anti-government radicals", are those who honestly desire (he admits their conscientiousness) that God's eternal law of right, of justice, of good will, may be supreme in all our national & social relations — and not set aside, as it now openly is, by the iniquitous and despotic provisions of human enactments.

I have had copies of the "Liberator" of June 4th & 11th mailed to you. Mr. Wallcutt says your numbers were certainly sent, with the others. He says he is particularly cautious about the foreign papers; and he is one of the most scrupulously exact men, in all his doings, I ever knew. Probably they got mislaid in some of the Post-offices, between our office and your house. — Mr. Garrison left Boston a fortnight since, on a tour to Pennsylvania, Ohio, & Western N. York. I believe he has never before visited Ohio. He will be an object of great interest, & curiosity, and will undoubtedly do a great work for Anti-Slavery. He designs to be gone, about 2 months. Meantime, Mr. Quincy edits the "Liberator"; and I am rendering

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to him, in so doing, such apsitance as the duties of my office will allow; indeed, during Mr. G.'s absence, I shall probably set aside some work which I should otherwise do, if I find my apsitance in the paper is really needed. Mr. Dixon lives at Dedham, 10 miles from Boston; and much of the arrangement of the paper must fall upon others. In a late letter you say you hardly understand what my "Agency office means." The General Agent of the Mass. Soc'y. is the principal executive officer in its affairs. It belongs to him to arrange meetings in different parts of the State, to see that they are properly attended by speakers, to co-operate (on these points) with the various County Societies, &c.; also, to make appointments for the several Lecturing agents, and correspond with individuals in the different towns respecting the visits of such agents, and on all other matters pertaining to the Cause; also, to oversee the publication of tracts, & their distribution; to see that petitions to the State & National authorities are duly circulated for signatures. In addition to this, he is expected to attend all State & County meetings himself, to speak & act for the cause; also, to give Lectures, as he may find or make opportunity. A prominent part of my work, as Agent, will probably be the preaching, on Sundays, in such pulpits as I may find open to me, as Genl. Agent of Mass. A.-S. Soc'y. I know I shall find acces to some; it remains to be seen to how many. It will be a good test of the Anti-Slavery of our Unitarian pulpits & congregations. As to gaining admittance to the principal pulpits of the denomination I might as well ask permission to preach in Westminster abbey. Several pulpits have been offered to me, since my appointment. As yet I have occupied but two one in Worcester Co., the other in Middlesex Co. The arrangements for large Pic Nic (anti-Slavery) Gatherings on the 4th of July, and 1st of August, (2 or 3 meetings falling on this latter day) have occupied much of my time since I commenced my labors. Yet I feel that I have hardly got to work yet. The preparation of lectures engrosses the most of my time & thoughts at present. — My family still remain in Leicester (50 m. from Boston, — 44 by R. Road to Worcester, thence 6 by Carriage), and I go home to see them when I can. I have just been passing a week there, enjoying the pure country air, and the delightful country stillness, very much. While in the city, I am a dweller in my father's house, which is a very pleasant arrangement to me.

Have I ever replied to your inquiry why Mr. Garrison made you address him as "My dear Brother"? I called his attention to it, and he was quite surprised that he had done so. He could hardly believe it, until he had looked up the paper. He said he cd. not explain how it came to be so, & appeared to regret it much. It was quite inadvertent, he said, and in no wise intentional.

The Mr. Thompson, who figured at the Hackney meeting, we suppose is one Pishey Thompson, a bookseller long resident in Washington, D.C. — a constant associate of Slaveholders, & very probably one himself or, at least, an employer of Slave-labor: I know not how this is. His judgment of what Anti-Slavery is must be rated at a low figure.

But I must close, as in half an hour the Steamer's Mails will close. My kind respects to your daughter — also to Mr. & Mrs. Armstrong, Miss Carpenter, Mr. James, and all my Bristol friends. Believe me, with grateful & affectionate respect, Yours Samuel May Jr.

The prospectus of a new Review is issued — to be conducted by Rev. Theo. Parker, R. W. Emerson, Dr. S. G. Howe and other free spirits; to be styled the "Massachusetts Review" — first no. on the 1st December.